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DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AUGUST 1983

HEARING BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES NINETY-EIGHTH CONGRESS FIRST SESSION

AUGUST 3, 1983

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST, AUGUST 1983

AUGUST 3, 1983

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST,
Washington, D.C.

The subcommittee met at 1:35 p.m., in room H-139, the Capitol, Hon. Lee H. Hamilton (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. HAMILTON. The meeting of the subcommittee will come to order. Today, the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East meets in open session to review recent developments in the Middle East.

Although the subcommittee had hoped to have these hearings on a regular basis when Congress is in session, we have been able to schedule only two general hearings this year. The last hearing to review policy was June 2.

The hearing today will focus on the situation in Lebanon, the recent Israeli decision to pull back its troops, United States strategy for engaging Syria in troop withdrawal talks, recent developments in the Persian Gulf, and U.S. relations with the other countries of the Middle East.

We are happy to have with us today Mr. Robert H. Pelletreau, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs.

Mr. Pelletreau, we welcome you before this subcommittee. We understand you have a statement. It will be entered into the record in full. I would appreciate it if you would summarize that statement so we can get to questions rather promptly.

STATEMENT OF ROBERT H. PELLETREAU, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY, BUREAU OF NEAR EASTERN AND SOUTH ASIAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Mr. PELLETREAU. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In the 2 months that have passed since Assistant Secretary Veliotes appeared before you, many activities have taken place in the Middle East. It has been 2 months of intense activity. The positive element that occurred in June was the ratification by the Lebanese Parliament of the agreement between Lebanon and Israel. This demonstrated not only the broad support in Lebanon for the agreement as such, but the broad support in Lebanon for the Government of President Gemayel and for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanese territory.

Early in July, the Secretary visited the area, coming back from Islamabad. No breakthroughs were expected from this visit, but it demonstrated the U.S. commitment to the area and to securing peaceful solutions in the area, and it allowed the Secretary to assess in a personal way where we were toward these goals.

The Syrian position, if anything, over this period has hardened, but our dialog has been maintained.

There were three visitors to Washington later in the month, or three sets of visitors, I should say. The first was Shaikh Isa bin Salam of Bahrain, an old and valued friend. The second, President Gemayel, gave us an opportunity to reaffirm our strong commitment to Lebanon and its unity and its independence, its sovereignty, and gave us an opportunity to see how we would work together in the days, weeks, and months ahead.

At that time, Bud McFarlane was appointed as the President's Special Envoy to the Middle East. Then, the ministers from Israel, Minister Shamir and Minister Arens, came at our invitation after Prime Minister Begin asked that his visit be postponed, and we went over with them where we stood in Lebanon. We had an opportunity to discuss Israel's decision to redeploy its forces in Lebanon so that this redeployment would occur in the context of withdrawal of all foreign forces.

The atmosphere of this visit was particularly good, Mr. Chairman. There was a fourth visitor during the time that did not receive much attention. It was Osama al Baz, the Security Adviser to President Mubarak of Egypt. This allowed us to review our full range of policies in cooperation with Egypt in the political sphere, in the security sphere, and in the economic sphere, and to reaffirm that our relationship with Egypt is one of full partnership.

Also during the month, a World Bank sponsored meeting on assistance to Lebanon took place in Paris, and a number of nations pledged assistance to help the central Government of Lebanon in the rehabilitation of its country. This coincided with completion of action in Congress on the supplemental appropriation that we had requested for U.S. assistance to Lebanon.

Another positive development during the month was the release of David Dodge after 1 year of captivity.

There were many continuing conflicts during this period in this volatile region. Some of the more prominent ones were the incidents that took place in Hebron, fighting of Palestinians against Palestinians in the Bekka, the fighting between Druze and Phalange forces in other parts of Lebanon, the continuing tragedy of the Iran-Iraq War, and now the new aggression by Libya against Chad.

These have been serious obstacles to peace and security in the region, and serious challenges to our diplomacy, but we will be continuing to exert our efforts to find peaceful solutions to these many conflicts.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[Mr. Pelletreau's prepared statement follows.]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROBERT H. PELLETREAU, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE, BUREAU OF NEAR EASTERN AND SOUTH ASIAN AFFAIRS

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Subcommittee: I appreciate this opportunity to discuss with you today recent events in the Middle East and our policies there. Before we begin our discussion I would like to make some brief comments.

As Assistant Secretary Velotes said to this Subcommittee on June 2, 1983, the basic goal of the United States in the Middle East is to work toward resolution of conflicts which endanger world peace and threaten important U.S. political, security and economic interests in that region.

We are all too aware that the Middle East and some adjacent areas are a volatile area, fraught with tensions which pose serious challenges to American diplomacy. The longstanding dispute between the Arab states and Israel, the continuing crisis in Lebanon, the unresolved war between Iraq and Iran and new aggression by Libya in Chad remain serious obstacles to peace and security in the region. The United States is committed to the peaceful resolution of these and other conflicts in the region. In some cases, such as Lebanon and the Arab-Israeli dispute, we are taking the lead. In others we are encouraging diplomatic efforts by other states and regional groups.

We are also committed to helping friendly nations in the region through economic and security assistance. These essential programs reinforce the stability of friendly states in the Middle East and strengthen their means of defending themselves from hostile internal and external challenges, including threats from the Soviet Union and its proxies. In this connection we are continuing to develop closer security cooperation with states in the region so that we can respond more effectively in times of crisis.

Let me first turn to Lebanon. The United States has been intensively involved there for the past several years in an effort to help that small country end its long siege of suffering and turmoil. Our goal remains a peaceful, independent, fully sovereign Lebanon, restoration of Lebanese territorial integrity and a strong central Lebanese government. The key to this must be withdrawal of all foreign forces, Israeli, Syrian and PLO. Only after this takes place can the Lebanese once more gain command of their own nation and their own future. The agreement between Lebanon and Israel of May 17, 1983, was an important step toward this goal, and for another basic U.S. objective—security for Israel's northern border.

The recent visit of President Amin Gemayel of Lebanon was an opportunity for President Reagan to reinforce our support for Lebanon. We are encouraged by President Gemayel's deep personal commitment to heal the wounds of communal strife which have plagued Lebanon, to build a strong national consensus, and to strengthen the Lebanese Armed Forces as an instrument of national unity.

The mission of Ambassador McFarlane to the Middle East represents a continuation of our efforts to help resolve the Lebanese dilemma. He will continue the search for peace, consulting with the governments of Lebanon, Syria, Israel, and other important nations in the region, as did his distinguished predecessor, Ambassador Habib.

Syria's unwillingness to withdraw its forces remains the crux of the Lebanese problem. The continued presence of Syrian troops in Lebanon, and PLO forces as well, has prevented the implementation of the May 17 Agreement and the full withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon, thus prolonging the conflict in that beleaguered nation. Syria has said in the past that it will withdraw its forces when the Government of Lebanon says they are no longer needed. We hope that Syria will meet its commitment. We are continuing our dialogue with Syria in the conviction that this can help lead to negotiations between Syria and Lebanon and withdrawal of Syrian forces.

All but a few of the Arab states of the region have supported Lebanon's right to pursue its own destiny. And the Lebanese people themselves have registered their support for withdrawal of all foreign forces by their Parliament's endorsement of the May 17 Agreement. We continue to believe Syria has much to gain in furthering its own interests by withdrawing its forces from Lebanon. A neighboring Arab state, thereby ensuring the withdrawal of Israeli forces. By doing so it will contribute to restoring Lebanon's sovereignty and well being, as well as to the broader peace process in the region. The alternative of continuation of the current stand-off only invites further tension and violence in Lebanon, with the ever present risk of miscalculation and the danger of renewed Israeli-Syrian hostilities, which would serve no one's interests.

The visit last week of Israel's Foreign Minister Shamir and Defense Minister Arens represented an important opportunity to review all the issues relating to the

Lebanon crisis. The Israelis assured us that they share our goal of a strong, sovereign Lebanon. They emphasized that they have absolutely no territorial ambitions there. Naturally, our discussions focused heavily on the Israeli decision to withdraw from the Shuf. In Israel's view, the projected redeployment of Israeli forces to the Awali River is the first stage in a full withdrawal, as envisaged by the Lebanese-Israeli Agreement. The Israelis have made it clear that this redeployment is in no way intended to establish or encourage a long term, permanent division of Lebanon between Israeli and Syrian forces. We are heartened by this reassurance that Israel's redeployment plans are consistent with our overall goals and will allow Lebanon to regain sovereignty over additional Lebanese territory.

While we have recently been deeply engaged with the Lebanon problem, our most fundamental goal in the Middle East continues to be peace between Israel and its Arab neighbors and a just solution to the Palestinian dilemma. The basis of our policy in this regard remains President Reagan's initiative of September 1, 1982, which is firmly rooted in Security Council resolution 242 and the Camp David framework. I want to make clear that the United States is determined to pursue this initiative, as circumstances permit. The need for answers to the inter-connected problems of security and recognition for Israel and the realization of the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people is no less urgent today than in the past. The President's initiative remains the most promising and realistic approach to resolving these political, territorial and, perhaps most important, human problems. It must be given a chance to work through negotiations between Jordan and Israel, with representative Palestinian participation.

It is evident to all observers that there has been disappointingly little progress in recent months toward the negotiations called for by the President's initiative. Conflict within the Palestinian community, and the failure to date of Arab support for Jordan's entry into the peace process to coalesce have thwarted forward movement. Also, Israel's rejection of the President's initiative and its continuing settlement activity on the West Bank have not been helpful. Nevertheless, we have made clear to Israel and the Arab states that the President's proposal remains on the table. Our support for its remains steadfast. It continues to represent an opportunity through which the governments and peoples of the area can move toward peace. We can only hope that the Arab states will find a way to resolve the differences among themselves so that a process of negotiations can begin. In the meantime, the Palestinian people—in the occupied territories and elsewhere—are confronted by real human needs which must also be addressed.

In connection with the search for peace, I want to emphasize the importance of Jordan, a valued friend of the United States. King Hussein has expressed his willingness to enter into negotiations with Israel if he can obtain a threshold level of Arab support for doing so. Because of our long and close ties with Jordan and the critical role it can play in the peace process, we must ensure that the U.S. policy toward Jordan, including our assistance programs, continues to support the Kingdom.

While we hope to expand the peace process, we continue to work closely with our existing peace process partner, Egypt. President Mubarak's government continues, in public and private, vigorously to support our efforts to promote peace. We have welcomed Egypt's support both in Lebanon, where Egypt has sought to support the Gemayel government and the Israeli-Lebanese agreement, and in the region as a whole, where Egypt maintains its strong support of President Reagan's initiative. In addition to our political cooperation, we continue to work closely with Egypt on a variety of regional security and strategic issues. In sum, our relationship with Egypt continues to be one of full partnership.

Today there is another little known but serious conflict in an area which adjoins the Middle East. I speak of the war in the poor developing nation of Chad. For many months the legitimate government of President Habre has been assailed by Libyan efforts to undermine it. Last weekend Libya escalated its involvement by conducting bombing raids using Soviet-built attack aircraft against Faya Largeau, a village in northern Chad. This flagrant aggression in Chad is another example of Libya's dangerous and irresponsible behavior throughout the region. In response to Libya's assault and Chad's request for assistance in defending itself, the United States is providing limited military supplies, including anti-aircraft missiles, to Chadian government forces. We are also consulting closely with other friendly governments to determine how best to help Chad protect its sovereignty.

Libya's military adventures in Chad, which are made possible by its vast store of modern Soviet weapons and aircraft, are an unfortunate reminder of the threat Libya poses to all of its neighbors. This hostile Libyan action highlights the need for

continuing major U.S. support for the security assistance needs of Tunisia, Sudan, and Egypt.

The war between Iraq and Iran is another festering conflict in the Middle East which remains unresolved. Unfortunately, the prospects for peace seem to have dimmed since last spring when initiatives by envoys from the UN and the Gulf Co-operation Council raised hopes that these two adversaries might be ready for peace. But those efforts foundered. Recent increases in military activity in the central and northern fronts, and especially threats to the Persian Gulf by both sides are ominous new developments in this long and bloody conflict.

The United States had deplored threats by Iraq to carry out new attacks on Iranian oil facilities in the Gulf and by Iran to retaliate by restricting oil exports from the Gulf. We have urged both sides to seize the opportunity for negotiating peace. We have also underscored our commitment, first expressed at the outbreak of the war, to freedom of navigation. Oil from the Gulf is vital to the entire international community. We want to ensure that there is no misunderstanding about our long-standing commitment to free navigation in those international waters.

Mr. Chairman, we will continue to encourage a negotiated settlement of the Iran-Iraq War. We do so, not just because of the menace it poses to oil supplies and to neighboring states, but because of the immense and horrifying loss of life it has caused. A way must be found to end this dreadful war in a way that ensures the territorial integrity of both states and protection of both from intervention in their internal affairs. We are also urging the parties to deal with the major oil spill in the Gulf from wells damaged in the war. We hope that this serious ecological threat to the region can be dealt with now, if there is a will to do so, even if Iran and Iraq are not yet willing to come to grips with the larger issues of the war.

Although the conflicts which I have touched on, and others are serious obstacles to overall peace and stability in the region, there is a deep yearning by the people of the Middle East and by the majority of the states in the region for peace and the benefits of economic and social development peace can bring. In addition to our efforts to encourage peaceful resolution of disputes, the United States is also committed to helping friendly states in the region strengthen their resilience and self sufficiency through economic and military aid. History has taught us that it is easier for nations which feel safe and secure to take the risks that are necessary for peace. For this reason, this Administration places a very high priority on working with the Congress to provide and sustain substantial levels of economic and military assistance to the region.

While this is not the occasion for extensive discussion of aid, I would like to emphasize one aspect of security assistance which requires more attention. I refer to the need to tailor our programs more carefully to the financial circumstances of the recipients. Economic difficulties in recent years have weakened the ability of some states in the region to repay economic and security assistance provided on a loan basis. We should, therefore, consider together whether the United States should begin to provide increased portions of grant rather than loan assistance to those countries which are particularly beset with credit problems.

Mr. Chairman, in closing let me make a final observation on the challenges that confront us in the Middle East. It is true that we are faced with many frustrations, for example in Lebanon and with the peace process. But we have learned through the years that the path to peace in the Middle East is long and tortuous. Progress is never a certainty and when it comes, it is never easy. The United States cannot, however, opt out of the search for peace. Previous accomplishments such as the Camp David Agreements, as well as the high cost of failure and further conflict, require that we persevere. Thus, we intend to pursue our basic policies with steadfastness and resolve. If we are firm, consistent and patient, we are confident that we can move forward.

SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL FROM LEBANON

Mr. HAMILTON. Thank you, Mr. Pelletreau.

Let us start with Syria. The first question is, how do we get Syrians out of Lebanon?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Mr. Chairman, there is going to be no easy solution or quick fix to the Syrians leaving Lebanon. As I mentioned in my statement, the Syrian position has, if anything, hardened somewhat over the last 2 months, but there have been some positive developments. The Secretary spent some 5 hours with Presi-

dent Assad in Damascus. The Syrians have agreed in principle to the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon.

They do not equate their presence in Lebanon with Israel's presence. They have clearly told us that their relationship with Lebanon does not depend on the military presence. They have told us and reaffirmed during the Secretary's visit that they support a strong and independent Lebanese central Government. They have also expressed their strong opposition to the Lebanon-Israeli agreement and the prospect that Israel might achieve gains.

U.S. STRATEGY FOR SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL

Mr. HAMILTON. Let me discuss with you a little bit our strategy to get Syria out. What types of things or approaches are we taking to get Syria out?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Well, it is a series of tracks, I would say, Mr. Chairman. The first one is that we work closely with the Government of Lebanon to maintain its strength and to allow it to resist—

Mr. HAMILTON. Have the Lebanese said get out to the Syrians?

Mr. PELLETREAU. The Lebanese have made it very clear that they no longer desire or need a Syrian presence in Lebanon. This was the subject of an Arab summit resolution last fall.

Mr. HAMILTON. Have they formally said to the Syrians, get out?

Mr. PELLETREAU. They have not put a formal demand on the table.

Mr. HAMILTON. Why not?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Because, as they have told us, they fear that this would be a sign of confrontation when there are efforts going on directly and through other parties to achieve the withdrawal of Syrian forces before such a demand is fully laid on the table.

Mr. HAMILTON. Do we agree with the Lebanese that it would be counterproductive, or ineffective, or unwise at this time to request formally that Syria get out?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Well, there is no question that the Lebanese want the Syrians to get out, and everybody knows that, everybody in the Arab world and the Syrian and Lebanese Governments, and we have discussed this question with the Lebanese Government. We understand their position. At some point, it may change.

Mr. HAMILTON. Do we agree with the Lebanese position?

Mr. PELLETREAU. We understand it, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HAMILTON. Have we requested that they disinvite Syria?

Mr. PELLETREAU. We have not formally requested that they send a formal demand to Syria. We think this is a decision that they have to make—when the best timing is, the most opportune time—but we do discuss it with them.

LOCATION OF ISRAELI TROOPS

Mr. HAMILTON. I am trying to get an idea of the various approaches or pressure points, if you will, on Syria. The Israeli troops are how close to Damascus at the closest point?

Mr. PELLETREAU. It is approximately 25 kilometers.

Mr. HAMILTON. Is that an area from which the Israelis are now withdrawing, or do they plan to stay there?

Mr. PELLETREAU. There is no current intention that I am aware of that the Israelis are planning a withdrawal from that area. That area is in the southern part of the Biqa Valley. At one point—

Mr. HAMILTON. Could you point it out to me?

Mr. PELLETREAU. At one point, it comes within several kilometers of the main Beirut-Damascus road. Let us see. The point where it is closest would be over in here [indicating] on map.

Mr. HAMILTON. It is that section of the Lebanese-Syrian border that protrudes into Syria?

Mr. PELLETREAU. That is right, but they go along here, up—let us see. This map shows Jebel Baruk.

Mr. HAMILTON. It does not.

Mr. PELLETREAU. Yes, here is Al Baruk. Jebel Baruk is this area here.

Mr. HAMILTON. Who occupies that?

Mr. PELLETREAU. The Israelis. Now, the area they are planning to withdraw from is this area right in here. You see, here is the Awwali River. If you follow along from the Awwali River up the Baruk River, roughly that area there.

Mr. HAMILTON. That is the withdrawal area?

Mr. PELLETREAU. That is this stage of withdrawal, sir.

UNITED STATES-ALLIED EFFORTS TO OBTAIN SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL

Mr. HAMILTON. Now, we, I suppose, will continue to work with our friends in the area, our allies, particularly Saudi Arabia, to try to influence Syrian withdrawal, and to persuade Syria that it is isolated in the world, the Arab world, by maintaining a presence in Lebanon.

Mr. PELLETREAU. That is correct.

Mr. HAMILTON. Are we in any way trying to energize the Lebanese people themselves to express opposition to the Syrians in the country?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I am not sure that we as an outside power should be doing that. I think that the Lebanese Government in its efforts to maintain its national consensus against the various pressures that are trying to split that national consensus is calling on the Lebanese people to do that sort of thing, and make that message clear.

Mr. HAMILTON. Are we trying to persuade the Syrians that it is actually counterproductive to their own interests to remain in Lebanon, and that the effect of their presence in Lebanon will be to drive Lebanon toward the Israelis and the Americans?

Mr. PELLETREAU. We have made those arguments to them, and we will continue to. One of the positive elements is that we do have an ongoing dialog with Syria, one that the Syrians themselves welcome.

TIMEFRAME FOR SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL

Mr. HAMILTON. I take it that the timeframe for Syrian withdrawal is an extended one. That is, we do not expect a Syrian withdrawal in the short term. We are looking more now toward a longer term perspective. Is that right?

Mr. PELLETREAU. There has been no indication of when Syria might consider withdrawing its forces in the short term or in the long term, Mr. Chairman, except that Syria has stated that it agrees in principle with the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon.

U.S. MISJUDGMENT OF SYRIA'S INTENT TO WITHDRAW

Mr. HAMILTON. One other question, and then I will turn to Mr. Zschau. It has struck me over a period of months that the United States has rather badly misjudged what it would take to get the Syrians out of Lebanon. Ambassador Habib told us on a number of occasions that he had a commitment from the Syrians to withdraw, and that he would keep that commitment in his pocket until the right time.

The Lebanese, as I understand it, told us on a number of occasions that they could handle the Syrian part of the negotiations.

The State Department testified here last September before this subcommittee that in its view, the end of 1982 would be an outer limit target date for the withdrawal of all foreign troops from Lebanon, and we should achieve this quick agreement.

In March of this year, the Department of State again testified that "In discussions with us, and, we understand, in discussions with the Lebanese and others, the Syrians have reconfirmed their willingness to withdraw in the context of an Israeli withdrawal."

I guess the question then comes, how is it that we have so badly misjudged the willingness of the Syrians to withdraw? Why is it that you were testifying that you would have them out by the end of 1982? Why is it that you were optimistic about their willingness to withdraw.

Mr. PELLETREAU. We thought, Mr. Chairman, that there were a number of Syrian statements on the record, not just to us and to the Lebanese, but on the public record at Delhi and others places that indicated their willingness to withdraw.

We had been hopeful at the time of some of those earlier statements that we would be able to reach a Lebanese-Israeli agreement quicker than was actually the case, but I do not think that anyone ever thought that Syrian withdrawal would be easy or automatic. At no time had the Syrians actually expressed to any party the terms under which they would withdraw. They just expressed their willingness to withdraw in principle.

So, I am not persuaded that if it had been played any other way, the results would be any different today.

Mr. HAMILTON. Well, what concerns me is that we misjudged it, that we misread those general statements about withdrawal, that we lacked accurate enough information about Syria and what motivates them in this situation to judge it correctly, I think we did misjudge it.

We have a quotation from the Syrian Foreign Minister last December about Israeli demands for some normalization of relations with Lebanon, and he responded, "Of course, we will not withdraw if these are the conditions."

The point, I think, of that quotation simply is that, while we had the statements that you refer to, we also had a lot of signals that they were going to be very tough on this.

Mr. Zschau.

Mr. ZSCHAU. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

NEW U.S. INITIATIVES FOR SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL

Given the situation today, What is it that we are doing to get the Syrians to withdraw or to agree to withdraw? Is there any new initiative other than maintaining the dialog that you referred to?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Well, I cannot really get into what Bud McFarlane's mission has in the works, but basically it is the continuation of the diplomatic efforts with those who have been helping us and trying to reinforce those efforts, trying to bring home to the Syrians that it is in their interest as well as the interest of Lebanon and Lebanon's health and its sovereignty for them to enter negotiations with Lebanon for the withdrawal of their forces, and I think some of these are strong arguments and persuasive arguments, and they will continue to be made both to the Syrians directly and to other parties who might have some influence on Syria, and we will try to keep all of them engaged on the course.

APPOINTMENT OF AMBASSADOR MCFARLANE

Mr. ZSCHAU. Is the new face, Bud McFarlane's versus Phil Habib's, is that a different attempt that we should look for hopefully?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Well, the changeover from Phil Habib to Bud McFarlane was not something that was specifically designed in this direction, but we know that the Syrians intend to welcome Mr. McFarlane and to continue the dialog through him, and we are optimistic that this dialog can over time produce results. Things do not come easily with the Syrians. Former Secretary Kissinger visited Damascus 30 times, I think, in the course of arranging the disengagement of the Golan, and spent I do not know how many hours in personal give and take with President Assad. It may come to that. We may need that kind of effort as we work with the Syrians. We think there is a framework in which that kind of effort can take place.

Mr. ZSCHAU. You are not suggesting that Dr. Kissinger would be sent back?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I was not suggesting that at all.

Mr. ZSCHAU. That kind of reference?

Mr. PELLETREAU. My reference was purely historic.

Mr. ZSCHAU. Was it the case that Mr. Habib was no longer welcome?

Mr. PELLETREAU. That was the case. The Syrians had said so publicly.

STATUS OF SEPTEMBER 1, 1982, PEACE INITIATIVE

Mr. ZSCHAU. Is the President's Middle East peace initiative dead?

Mr. PELLETREAU. The President's Middle East peace initiative is not dead.

Mr. ZSCHAU. What are its vital signs?

Mr. PELLETREAU. The fact that a number of Arab governments have specifically asked us to keep it alive, that it is on the table, that there are no other proposals on the table, let alone better proposals, that there are forces in the Arab world, including King Hussein, who continue to be interested in finding a way to come to the peace table, and we continue to believe that it represents a constructive and positive channel to peace negotiations, if the constellation of forces in the area is such that they can take advantage of it.

Mr. ZSCHAU. So you are continuing to get signals from the various players that this is something that could be pursued? There is a dialog that is continuing at some level?

Mr. PELLETREAU. That is correct. There is a good deal of support and interest in the area still for the President's peace initiative, and we think it is important that we keep it on the table and keep it available.

ADMINISTRATION'S LACK OF ATTENTION TO THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. ZSCHAU. Do you have some concern that perhaps we are taking our eye off the Middle East ball with our preoccupation with the issue of Central America? Do you feel that there is some lack of attention that might slow down any progress that could be made?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Not at all. I went through a brief catalog of the visitors we have had over the last month, and the fact that we have the Special Envoy out in the area right now is further indication that our commitment is very strong. I do not think it will be detracted or affected by the fact that we have other problems elsewhere in the world.

SOVIET ACTIVITY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. ZSCHAU. Could you give me a brief summary of Soviet activity in the Middle East at this time, whether there has been any movement, any change, any new action by the Soviet Union?

Mr. PELLETREAU. There is not a great deal of activity by the Soviet Union. The most prominent aspect of Soviet activity, of course, has been Soviet military resupply and military assistance to Syria. There is no question that this has been massive over the period since the Israeli entry into Lebanon, and this has had an important influence, we think, in determining Syria's attitude.

The other aspect of continuing Soviet involvement is continuing Soviet support for the PLO. In this case, to be honest, we think the Soviets have a bit of a problem. They have two entry points, if you will, for exercising their influence in the area, and one of those entry points is involved in trying to eat up the other one, and that confronts them with serious problems.

We do not think the Soviet Union is interested in any resumption of fighting in the area at all, but we do think they could exercise their influence in a more direct manner toward peace.

Mr. ZSCHAU. You do not see a relationship between the Soviet actions and the intransigence of the Syrians on this withdrawal?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I think that Syria will make its own decisions with regard to Lebanon and its withdrawal from Lebanon. The element of confidence in Soviet support probably strengthens the Syrian ability to take a tough line, but I do not believe the Soviets are having any substantial direct influence on Syrian decisionmaking in this regard. Syria is an intensely nationalistic country, and we believe that Syria is making its own decisions with regard to Lebanon.

STABILITY OF THE GEMAYEL GOVERNMENT

Mr. ZSCHAU. One quick final question. Are you concerned about whether or not the Gemayel government will be stable or it will fall? Have there been indications that it could fall?

Mr. PELLETREAU. The Gemayel government faces many problems, but we were heartened when President Gemayel was here at his courage, at his determination, at his belief in a unified Lebanon, unified in the sense of unifying all the confessional elements of the country, and his determination to persevere in that course, and we will certainly support him. He has a lot of problems, and will need all the help he can get.

Mr. ZSCHAU. Thank you, Mr. Pelletreau.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Smith.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES BY FOREIGN MINISTER SHAMIR AND DEFENSE MINISTER ARENS

Mr. Pelletreau, notwithstanding your answer to Mr. Zschau's question, was any agenda set during the latest Arens-Shamir-Shultz talks, and then with the President? Was there any agenda set at all? Was there any basic document which was agreed to as a game plan for the purpose of coordinating the efforts? I mean, basically, that is why they came.

Mr. PELLETREAU. We reviewed fully the situation in all its aspects with Minister Shamir and Arens, but I do not know of any specific document.

Mr. SMITH. I do not mean a document that everyone signed off on, but rather, some kind of basic agenda that everybody agreed to so that the Americans and the Israelis and the Lebanese basically understand what each other is doing.

Mr. PELLETREAU. In a broad sense, that is correct. In a broad sense, we did reaffirm our agreement on the basic principles that we are after, and the basic principles that we are after are full withdrawal of foreign forces and full restoration of Lebanese sovereignty over all of Lebanese territory, and security for Israel's northern border, and we discussed within that context specifically the decision that Israel has taken to redeploy its forces out of a certain area of Lebanon, and how that action could take place in a way that would help lead to withdrawal of all foreign forces and not act in another way.

And so we feel—we are all in closer step on that, and we have something to work on together.

ISRAELI INTENTIONS TOWARD LEBANON

Mr. SMITH. Would you say that the State Department, the administration of this country, as well as the Lebanese, are fairly well convinced that Israel does not want de facto partition or any partition of Lebanon, or is there still any kind of a problem with reference to that?

Mr. PELLETREAU. As far as our Government is concerned, we are convinced that Israel is not interested in remaining in 1 square inch of Lebanese territory any longer than it has to. We are convinced that Israel wants to achieve the full withdrawal of foreign forces, and wants a strong, unified, and independent Lebanon, and that is what we are working for.

Mr. SMITH. Has the Lebanese Government subscribed to that theory yet? Is Mr. McFarlane dealing with that issue now in Lebanon?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I think there is a broad recognition of that in Lebanon. After all, that is what the agreement specifies, that Israeli forces will withdraw, and will withdraw fully under the terms of that agreement, and the Lebanese negotiated that agreement in good faith and, I think, believe that when that agreement can be implemented, that all those conditions will occur.

ISRAELI TROOP WITHDRAWAL

Mr. SMITH. Is not the troubling aspect of your answer, however, that the agreement calls for the Syrians to withdraw basically simultaneously? And if the Israelis withdraw below the Awwali and stay there because the Syrians have not moved, you in effect do not have the agreement in play. It would have been a unilateral act on the part of Israel which does not comport with the agreement. Is that not the Burr under the saddle in this?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Actually, the agreement makes no reference at all to the Syrians.

Mr. SMITH. I use the agreement in the generic sense, including the side documents.

Mr. PELLETREAU. It is true that that is Israel's position. Israel is beginning its withdrawal and beginning its withdrawal within the context of the agreement. That is the way the Israelis themselves are describing their redeployment.

SAUDI VIEW OF THE ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL

Mr. SMITH. How do the Saudis view the Israeli withdrawal, and are they or can they be convinced, as you are here in the State Department and the administration, that Israel does not seek any partition? And would that be a benefit to us in our dealing with the Saudis and their dealing or supposed dealings with the Syrians?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I am not sure I can give you a detailed answer on how the Saudis view what the Israelis are doing, but in a general sense, the Arab world welcomes return of Arab territory to Arab sovereignty, whether it is a small piece or a large piece. Of course, they want to be sure, as sure as they can, that this works in the direction of withdrawal.

ARAB LEAGUE MANDATE

Mr. SMITH. Well, how in fact does the Arab League mandate, which allowed Syria to go into the Lebanese territory in the first place, now get removed so that the Arabs will allow Arab territory to be controlled by the Arabs who literally own the country as opposed to Arabs who do not own the country and who have never treated Lebanon as an independent, sovereign nation?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Well, actually, the Arab summit last fall passed a resolution calling for negotiations between Lebanon and Syria for the withdrawal of Syrian forces, and the key word, the phrase they used was, "in light of withdrawal of Israeli forces." There has been no Arab financing of the continuing Syrian presence since that time.

I think it is pretty clear that there is no longer an Arab League mandate.

Mr. SMITH. You think that is about as far as, other than short of their saying directly that you should get out of Lebanon, you think the Arab League has gone about as far as it is going to go?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I think that is one of the areas we have to continue to work on.

NATIONAL SALVATION FRONT

Mr. SMITH. One final question. What significance do you give now to the Syrian-backed Lebanese front to counter the Gemayel Government that is now rapidly springing up and the Syrian control basically of the PLO? What does that bode for an early solution or at least partial solution to this problem?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Well, it is not on this so-called National Salvation Front, it is not at all clear how much Syrian influence and Syrian domination there is over this group. The Front was announced by Walid Jumblatt, from what we can see as part of his efforts to strengthen his hand as he negotiates with the government to reach an accommodation for what he knows, as well as everyone else knows, is coming in the Shuf, which is a redeployment of Israeli forces.

So, he seemed to be the primary moving force in this. I think it is quite significant that Shiite leaders in Lebanon have not joined him, and that it really has not developed in any way beyond the initial announcement.

THE DRUZE-PHALANGE CONFLICT IN THE SHUF

Mr. SMITH. Well, have we gone beyond that point and tried to make some sense out of the problem between—I mean, the United States individually, between the Druze and the Phalange in the Shuf? Obviously, that is going to be a major difficulty. If the Druze refuse to even cooperate with the Phalange, you will have a government that will have to do a great deal of fighting in that area. Are we attempting to moderate that problem?

Mr. PELLETREAU. The primary role in reaching an accommodation in the Shuf must be for the Lebanese Government. We are trying to urge the different parties that have to be involved to get on with this process quickly and in good faith, because time is

growing short, and accommodation should really be reached before the Israelis begin to withdraw their forces. If it is not, it is going to be a much more difficult situation for the Lebanese Government to face.

Mr. SMITH. Can we accept that kind of a problem? Would it be possible to obtain partial withdrawal even without a total resolution of that problem in the sense that the Lebanese army may ultimately have to go in there and take within it the Phalange forces, or the Druze may never agree to anything? Would that be a possibility?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I do not see that as a serious possibility, Mr. Smith, because the Lebanese army is organized on the principle that it represents the whole country, and it is organized on the principle that the army will eventually replace all the militia forces in Lebanon, and in order to do that, it must maintain the confidence of all the different groups in Lebanon.

Mr. SMITH. So it would have to then swallow the various militias in the Shuf at some point in time?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Something has to happen to the militias. It is not necessarily that they would be swallowed into the army, but I do not think it is a likelihood that you would see the army and the Phalange operating together on this.

Mr. SMITH. Do you think the Druze will ever lay down their arms and disband their militia based upon the occupation by the Lebanese army, which is considered by them to be an extension of the Phalange to some degree?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I think there are many Druze that recognize that the Lebanese army is not in reality an extension of the Phalange. There are many Druze officers and soldiers in the army. And in fact there have been many direct contacts between the army and Druze leaders as they try to work out how this change-over is going to take place. We are hopeful that this will lead to positive results.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Dymally.

POSSIBLE U.S. DISCUSSIONS WITH THE PLO

Mr. DYMALLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, in July of last year, Mr. Saab Salem told a delegation of members that Arafat was the most moderate of all the PLO leaders, and if we miss an opportunity to begin a dialog with him, his successors will be such extremists that there will be no opportunity at all, and recent events have proven Mr. Salam to be a prophet on that score.

Given that fact, is there any notion of doing away with the Kissinger approach and talking to the PLO?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Our conditions for talking with the PLO are very clear, and they remain as they have frequently been stated. We were very hopeful a few months ago that Mr. Arafat and King Hussein would reach an agreement. I think the fact that they did not, that Arafat backed away from it, was a serious mistake on his part, an error that may perhaps prove to be the most serious one

he has ever made, and the condition that he finds himself in today is a direct result, I think, of that mistake that he made.

RECREATING A DIALOG BETWEEN JORDAN AND THE PLO

Mr. DYMALLY. I share your point of view. The other observation that he made which was prophetic, he said that the result of the failure to start a dialog would be the bombing of U.S. Embassies, not only in the Middle East but in other parts, and no sooner had he made that prediction than we witnessed the bombing of the U.S. Embassy in Lebanon.

In view of that fact, in view of the fact that what we see emerging are extremists in the PLO, do we not now see the necessity for at least recreating that dialog between Jordan and Arafat?

Mr. PELLETREAU. We would like to see it come back, but it takes the people who would be involved themselves to make those decisions, and from what we see of the way Mr. Arafat is acting now, he is acting in the direction of trying to maintain the image of unity in the PLO, even though it may immobilize him completely with regard to what political steps he can take for some period of time; I cannot say for how long.

Of course, we would greatly deplore any turn by any elements of the PLO to greater terrorism.

RELUCTANCE OF SAUDI ARABIA TO STATE A PUBLIC POSITION

Mr. DYMALLY. One final question, Mr. Chairman. Why are the Saudis so reluctant to take a public position on trying to reconcile some of the problems? Is it the nature of the Saudis, or is it that they find it expedient to just stay in the background and be less effective?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Let me give you a personal answer on that, Mr. Dymally, and that is that the Saudis conduct their diplomacy, their relations with other Arab nations, within a framework, just as we conduct our relations within a framework, and that framework includes commitments to Arab summit resolutions, commitments above all to the concept of Arab unity, and it has always been their preference to try to deal with these questions in a very private way.

There has not been the tradition of the fourth estate and a very vigorous press in Saudi Arabia, either.

POSITION OF PRESIDENT ASSAD

Mr. DYMALLY. Mr. Chairman, let me reclaim my time again.

President Assad said to the same delegation that he was invited to go to Lebanon by the Arab League and by the Lebanese. The Israelis were uninvited guests, and therefore he did not plan to leave until he was asked to leave. I have reason to believe that he has been asked to leave, one, but the other part was that the Israelis would have to leave first before he followed, and I suspect he has continued to take that same position in the negotiations that we have been having with them. Is he holding firm to that position, that he was an invited guest?

Mr. PELLETREAU. He certainly sees Syria's presence in Lebanon as being on a completely different basis from Israel's presence in Lebanon, and his position has been that in principle, all forces, all foreign forces should withdraw from Lebanon in accordance with the appropriate U.N. Security Council resolutions. He does not accept any formal linkage between his withdrawals and the Israeli withdrawals, but exactly when and how Syrian withdrawals might take place is something that has yet to be worked out.

Mr. DYMALLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Levine.

SAUDI POSITION ON LEBANON

Mr. LEVINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Pelletreau, I would like to follow up one of the most recent questions that Mr. Dymally asked you with regard to Saudi reluctance to exert more of a role or at least more of a constructive role in this process. You talk about there being private ways of acting, and the only way we can interpret what they are doing frequently is not necessarily through reliance on the fourth estate, and yet in Sunday's Washington Post there was a clue, perhaps, through the fourth estate of a recent Saudi statement, and I would be interested in your view of it.

I think it was on the front page of Sunday's Post. It quoted the Saudis essentially as saying that they were worried or troubled that Lebanon had gone too far in terms of its normalization of its relations with Israel. If in fact Saudi Arabia is attempting to play any constructive role in this process and in the region, how can they take a position such as that, and what is your assessment of the validity or accuracy of that report in Sunday's Washington Post?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I am not familiar with such a specific statement by the Saudi Government. The Saudis, I think, are themselves uncomfortable with some aspects, some provisions of the agreement as it has been published, but they have felt that this is a decision for the Lebanese Government and the Lebanese people to make, and they have been involved and engaged in trying to bring about this objective that we are all working for, which is the withdrawal of all foreign forces.

We think they have been engaged positively. We want to see them continue to be engaged, and we think this will be one element of all the influences that work on Syria, and hopefully stimulate some greater Syrian flexibility.

Mr. LEVINE. Could you provide for the subcommittee any evidence or information that would help to support the conclusion that they have been engaged positively?

Mr. PELLETREAU. They have had their emissaries travel frequently to Damascus and to Lebanon. They have received Lebanese emissaries in Saudi Arabia, including the foreign minister and Saab Salam, who was mentioned just a few moments ago. They sent their minister of information, who was the former Ambassador in Beirut, to Lebanon just about at the time of the parliament's ratification of the agreement, and I think they have made clear in these ways and in a number of others their very strong support for the

RETURN OF THE EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR TO ISRAEL

Has our Government, our administration, taken any official position with regard to the appropriateness of Egypt returning an Ambassador to Israel and have we taken some action to try to improve that relationship and get Egypt to be a little bit more forthcoming in her relations with Israel?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Egypt has publicly said that it would return its Ambassador to Israel.

Mr. LEVINE. Syria said she would withdraw from Lebanon.

Mr. PELLETREAU. And we have supported that. We have spoken to the Egyptians about that. We hope it will occur soon.

Mr. LEVINE. Have we expressed any dismay or disapproval, disappointment, unhappiness about the fact that despite Egypt's statement that it would take this action it has continued to refuse to do so.

Mr. PELLETREAU. Yes, we have.

Mr. LEVINE. Thank you.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Lantos.

THE LEBANESE-ISRAEL-UNITED STATES ACCORD

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to apologize to you and to the Secretary for coming late. I was attending another hearing. I hope I will not be repetitious.

Mr. Secretary, in retrospect how do you evaluate the Lebanese-Israeli-United States accord?

Mr. PELLETREAU. We think that accord sets a positive and solid foundation for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon and for arrangements which will insure that the conditions which led to the Israeli action last year do not return. So we think it is still a good accord, and we hope the conditions will come about whereby it can be implemented. We support that agreement.

Mr. LANTOS. I share your appraisal. I wonder whether it was an oversight or whether it is deliberate that in responding to me you said the agreement sets the stage for Israeli troop withdrawal. You did not say Syrian and PLO withdrawal. Was that an oversight, or was it a deliberate omission?

Mr. PELLETREAU. No. This accord did not directly address the questions of Syrian and PLO withdrawal. As I mentioned a moment ago, the Syrians and the Lebanese and the Arab world generally consider the Syrian presence in Lebanon to be on a different basis than the Israeli presence.

I think it was very important that we went about achieving the Lebanon-Israeli agreement first because there is no confidence on the part of other Arab parties that the Israelis would indeed withdraw. We came and put before them an agreement that they would withdraw.

That was an important thing to have. We think that is a positive element in the overall equation and something that we can continue to work with.

Mr. LANTOS. I again agree with you, Mr. Secretary. I believe that Secretary Shultz received a great deal of unjustifiable criticism for having taken the Syrian statements at face value over a long period of time.

In retrospect do you feel that it would have been a mistake to involve the Syrians earlier because had that been done the Lebanese-Israeli-United States agreement could never have been completed? Do you agree with that?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Yes, I do. I think that we went about it on a sound basis, and as I mentioned, we needed to get an Israeli agreement first to lay before the other parties that the Israelis had agreed to withdraw and we, the United States, say that they have agreed to withdraw and they did not believe it otherwise until that had occurred.

Likewise it would have been an error in my view to have sought to involve the Syrians in the negotiation of that agreement. They were not a party. It did not concern their forces.

It concerned the Israeli forces in Lebanon between the Lebanese Government and the Israeli Government with what good offices we could provide. The Lebanese felt strongly that way, too.

Mr. LANTOS. Since you feel that the agreement was carefully negotiated and that it is a good agreement, am I safe in assuming the State Department rejects out of hand the current Syrian attempts to undo the agreement?

Mr. PELLETREAU. That is correct.

Mr. LANTOS. I take it, therefore, that the policy of our Government is to honor this agreement and work toward its implementation and not to consider alternatives which in any way would imply unraveling this agreement.

Mr. PELLETREAU. We certainly are not looking at alternatives which would reopen or open the agreement to renegotiation in some way. We think it is a good agreement and a sound agreement and is something we can work with.

U.S. RELAXATION OF TRADE CONTROLS WITH THE SOVIET UNION

Mr. LANTOS. Yesterday the press indicated that Secretary Shultz and Secretary Baldrige are pressuring the President against Mr. Weinberger's position to relax trade controls in our dealings with the Soviet Union. My first question is are those reports accurate?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I am not competent to answer, Mr. Lantos. I am not prepared to answer that question, but I would be happy to provide an answer for the record. I do not know, in other words, exactly the answer.

Mr. LANTOS. Did you see the paper yesterday?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Yes, I did.

Mr. LANTOS. Did the item intrigue you?

Mr. PELLETREAU. To be honest, sir, bluntly honest, I had just gotten word of my appearance before this subcommittee that afternoon and most of my efforts were in that direction.

Mr. LANTOS. Did it occur to you that we might ask you a question concerning that?

Mr. PELLETREAU. That you might ask that question did not occur to me, no.

[The information follows:]

No active proposals are being considered within this Administration for a major relaxation of export controls to the Soviet Union. And while there is no automatic

linkage in U.S.-Soviet affairs, Soviet actions, negative or positive, affect the overall atmosphere of the relationship. It is within this context that our specific policy decisions regarding the Soviet Union are taken. We approach these decisions on a case-by-case basis, deciding each in accordance with its own complex set of factors, and not with regard to any specific quid pro quo. However, our actions are affected by the climate of the U.S.-Soviet relationship.

Mr. LANTOS. Having asked that question let me pursue it. Does the State Department currently believe in the policy of linkage, i.e., taking steps in our dealings with the Soviet Union on a quid pro quo basis?

Mr. PELLETREAU. As a matter of principle I do not believe I can answer that question. There are obviously areas where Soviet activities are linked, but there are some areas where their activity and our responses are not necessarily linked. We just concluded a long-term grain agreement, for example.

Mr. LANTOS. That was going to be my next question. I do not know what that is an example of. Is that an example of linkage or nonlinkage?

Mr. SMITH. Capitalism at work.

Mr. PELLETREAU. I am not sure.

Mr. LANTOS. I must admit, Mr. Secretary, pleased as I was with your earlier response because we were in agreement I am somewhat frustrated, Mr. Chairman, on this issue because both with respect to the grain accord and the easing of export restrictions we do the Soviet Union gigantic favors. Admittedly the grain agreement may have some beneficial domestic ramifications for the agricultural sector and for the President's reelection chances.

But leaving that aside we are certainly doing the Soviet Union a major favor by guaranteeing stable, long-term grain supplies and by having a Secretary of State propose relaxation of export controls. Are these measures taken without any reference to Soviet policy in the Middle East?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I am sure they are taken in a way that takes into account Soviet policies elsewhere in the world.

Mr. LANTOS. Are they in response to Soviet conciliatory moves in the Middle East? Is that what you are suggesting?

Mr. PELLETREAU. No, I am not suggesting that.

Mr. LANTOS. Then what are you suggesting?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I do not know whether there is any specific relationship between Soviet activities in the Middle East and these decisions. I was not involved in these decisions. I honestly cannot tell you all the elements that went into them. I would be happy to try to get a more complete answer for you if you would like.

U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN THE LIBYAN-CHAD CONFLICT

Mr. LANTOS. What is the status of United States involvement in the Libya-Chad incursion at the moment? Do we have any advisors, any military personnel? What is the status of our direct or indirect support for Chad?

Mr. PELLETREAU. We are certainly supporting the Chad Government.

Mr. LANTOS. In what way?

Mr. PELLETREAU. We have recently sent some Redeye missiles to the Chad Government to help them defend themselves against

Libyan aircraft which over the past few days have been bombing Chadian forces within the territorial limits of Chad. We think that is a blatant violation of Chad's territorial integrity and Chad's borders and frontiers, and the Government ought to have the help, not only of ourselves, but of other friends in resisting this aggression.

Mr. LANTOS. Are we coordinating with the French in an operational sense?

Mr. PELLETREAU. We are consulting closely with the French.

Mr. LANTOS. What are the limits of the extent to which we will help, assuming that Libya shows signs of gaining the upper hand in this incursion?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I am not sure that I can state specifically what might be the limits of our response to a future Libyan action that has not yet occurred, but I think that our response would continue to be in the framework of the response so far, which has been to try to provide support in terms of equipment and supplies to the Chadian forces of President Habre themselves, so that they can carry on the task of defending their country against the Libyans.

Mr. LANTOS. Assuming that the supplies are inadequate, is there any contemplation of involving either French or U.S. forces?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I cannot speak for the French Government—

Mr. LANTOS. I did not ask you to speak for the French Government. I asked for your opinion.

Mr. PELLETREAU [continuing]. Or on what they may be planning on this or frankly what we ourselves might do in the future on it. The reason I am consulting my notes is that Chad is outside my immediate area of responsibility.

Mr. LANTOS. But Libya is not.

Mr. PELLETREAU. Of my own immediate area, it is. Let's see if I have anything more here that can help on this.

[Pause.]

Mr. PELLETREAU. I do not have anything further that can help on that specific question. A related question that I could answer is that we reserve the right of free passage through international waters and air space including the Gulf of Sidra. That has some effect on this.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you.

MULTINATIONAL FORCES IN LEBANON

Mr. HAMILTON. With the partial withdrawal of the Israeli forces in Lebanon, will there be an increase or a redeployment of the multinational forces in Lebanon?

Mr. PELLETREAU. No decision has been taken in that regard, Mr. Chairman. We obviously want to help the Lebanese Army to assume its responsibilities in this respect, and the Lebanese have asked the multinational force to consider what role it might play.

Mr. HAMILTON. How many troops do they want, the Lebanese, in the force?

Mr. PELLETREAU. They have not made a specific request for an expansion in the numbers that are there now either in terms of numbers of forces or in terms of expansion of area of operations.

They have asked in a more general way for the multinational force contributors to consider ways—

Mr. HAMILTON. When President Gemayel was here, he spoke to us about 25,000 troops. Has he not made that request?

Mr. PELLETREAU. He has not made that request specifically as that kind of a number, that I am aware of.

Mr. HAMILTON. Well, are we now engaged in consultations with the French or the Italians, Israelis about an increase in the multi-national force?

Mr. PELLETREAU. We have had some preliminary discussions, but we would expect to engage, in the first instance I think, more thoroughly with the Lebanese as they begin to—

Mr. HAMILTON. Do you anticipate we will have to increase the number of that force?

Mr. PELLETREAU. We have left open the possibility, the President has, that we might consider a modest increase in the force if that would be helpful, but no decisions have been taken as yet in that regard.

Mr. HAMILTON. Do you foresee the possibility that that force would be stationed along the Beirut-Damascus road or in the Shuf area as the Israelis withdraw?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Based on what I know at the present time I would not consider that either of those areas would be an area for operation of a U.S. contingent in—

Mr. HAMILTON. Do you anticipate that the Lebanese Army will do that?

Mr. PELLETREAU. The Lebanese Army will certainly have the priority and major responsibility in that regard, and the rest of us will see if there are ways that we can support that.

Mr. HAMILTON. Have the French agreed to increase their participation in any way?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Not specifically, but they have agreed to look at ways that they could be supportive.

Mr. HAMILTON. Are they encouraging an increase in the force now?

REDEVELOPMENT OF U.S. MARINES IN BEIRUT

Mr. PELLETREAU. Not that I am aware of, not specifically.

Mr. HAMILTON. If you were to engage in a deployment or patrolling of the U.S. marines now in Beirut along the Beirut-Damascus road or in the Shuf, would that constitute a new role or a new mandate and therefore require new statutory authorization for such use of U.S. troops?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I believe that any deployment of U.S. forces into the Shuf area itself would constitute a new role.

Mr. HAMILTON. And require statutory authorization?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Yes, indeed.

LINES OF ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL

Mr. HAMILTON. Let's get the map again. I want to get in my mind exactly the Israeli withdrawal and get a fairly precise idea of where their lines will be.

Mr. PELLETREAU. OK. You have Beirut here. [Indicating.]

The current lines from just south of Beirut that run up to touch Alayn, below the Beirut-Damascus highway, and they run up along there and to somewhere between the Bhamdun and Sawfar, I believe, and then cut on a line south toward Jebel Baruk and then further over here.

The withdrawal that they are contemplating would be the withdrawal from this northwestern area which includes their presence on the highway down below the Demur River going down to the Awwali River here and along the Awwali up through Al Baruk in this area. I am not sure the exact line that has been exactly determined, but that is the rough area, roughly a line about like that.

TIMEFRAME FOR WITHDRAWAL

Mr. HAMILTON. What is the time period of this withdrawal?

Mr. PELLETREAU. The Israelis would like to have the withdrawal completed by the time that winter sets in in Lebanon, the rainy season, which comes in late October or early November, in that timeframe.

Mr. HAMILTON. What is it that prompts the Israeli withdrawal?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I think it is primarily a question of the number of forces that they feel they are required to keep in that particular area because of the tension and the fighting that has occurred there. Israel has largely a reserve army and Israel feels that the large number of forces that are required in the Shuf could better be utilized in normal training activities rather than in the kind of activity that they had been involved in there, which I do not believe they ever contemplated.

CASUALTIES OF THE ISRAELI FORCES

Mr. HAMILTON. Are the Israeli forces continuing to sustain some casualties?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Indeed they are.

Mr. HAMILTON. Where are those casualties taking place?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Most of the casualties are taking place along the main roads that go through the southern part of town. In other words, most of the casualties are not in the Shuf.

Mr. HAMILTON. So the withdrawal of the Israeli forces or the partial withdrawal will not take them out of the areas where they have been sustaining the casualties?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Most of the casualties—I think that is correct. It will obviously have some effect in reducing the possibility of casualties, but our understanding is that that is not the major Israeli motivation.

The first motivation is manpower, and the second motivation is cost. We have an Israeli Defense Minister now who is very conscious of the costs and the trade-offs that are involved and spending money for one thing rather than another.

SECURITY DETERIORATION IN LEBANON

Mr. HAMILTON. You have the sense in reading the press in recent days that there has been a general deterioration of the security situation in Lebanon. The paper this morning reports six armies en-

gaged in clashes in Lebanon. Is that your sense of it now, there has in fact been a deterioration of the security in Lebanon?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Well, I noticed that catchy title, and it is true that in the Biqa there has been a tremendous ongoing tension. Whether I say increase in tension or not I am not sure. It is a tremendous ongoing tension because of the internecine disputes between the Palestinian forces there, and there are lots of different groups that are in the Biqa that espouse violence and that are not under any central authority.

Mr. HAMILTON. Is it your sense that the Syrians and their PLO allies are the groups principally responsible for the deterioration of the security in Lebanon?

Mr. PELLETREAU. They are the groups that are principally responsible for the continuing conflicts in the Biqa. I am not sure that I would lay at their door the troubles in the Shuf or directly quite honestly the continuing casualties which the Israelis are suffering.

SOURCE OF ISRAELI CASUALTIES

Mr. HAMILTON. The Israeli casualties are coming from what source?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Well, it is not clear that it is from any one particular source.

Mr. HAMILTON. Is it the Syrians?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I doubt whether it is the Syrians very much although there may be some Syrian inspiration behind the perpetrators. I think it is mostly small incidents that go after an individual Israeli vehicle or an Israeli convoy or a mine is planted in a road.

PLO REINFILTRATION INTO BEIRUT

Mr. HAMILTON. Has there been a PLO reinfiltration into Beirut?

Mr. PELLETREAU. We do not believe there has been a significant PLO reinfiltration. There may have been some. There may have been some up in Tripoli too.

Mr. HAMILTON. We have a vote pending. The subcommittee will recess while we cast our vote. Upon our return we will take up questions again with Mr. Smith.

Mr. LEVINE. There is a 5-minute vote following this.

Mr. HAMILTON. All right so there will be two votes. The subcommittee will stand in recess.

[Recess.]

NEW ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE NEAR EAST

Mr. HAMILTON. The subcommittee will resume its sitting. Is it correct, Mr. Secretary, that the new Assistant Secretary will be Mr. Murphy?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I would be the last to know, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HAMILTON. And that Mr. Veloutes will go to Egypt as the Ambassador?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I really do not have any comment on that, Mr. Chairman. Any announcements of such kind will take place when they take place.

ADMINISTRATION POLICY REVIEW OF THE MIDDLE EAST

Mr. HAMILTON. Now let's see. You were conducting a policy review in the Middle East over the last several weeks. Have any conclusions emerged from that policy review?

Mr. PELLETREAU. We have been consulting with governments that we have been working with in the Middle East on how we achieve our common objectives. I do not think there are any major new directions that have come out of that, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HAMILTON. Is it fair to say that Lebanon has kind of taken over the Middle East agenda at the moment and certainly crowded out the peace process, and the President's initiative at least for the time being and that your resources and focus will be on troop withdrawal from Lebanon for the next few months?

Mr. PELLETREAU. It is fair to say that Lebanon was the No. 1 item on the agenda both in the visit of President Gemayel and the visit of the two Israeli Ministers, but we did devote a certain amount of time to discussing the broader peace process particularly with the Israeli visitors. Our commitment to that broader peace process remains very strong.

INCREASED MILITARY ASSISTANCE FOR ISRAEL

Mr. HAMILTON. The press has reported that the President has agreed to favorable consideration to Israel's request for more generous military assistance and for the right to use some of that aid to develop weapons systems produced here. Is that an accurate report?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I would prefer to state it that we have such requests under consideration.

Mr. HAMILTON. There has been no determination made?

Mr. PELLETREAU. There has been no determination made.

Mr. HAMILTON. What request do we have from the Israelis?

Mr. PELLETREAU. There are a number of ongoing requests in connection with development of the Lavi fighter, requests with respect to off shore procurement using FMS funds, and we have not made any final decisions on those requests.

Mr. HAMILTON. Are we talking about fiscal year 1985?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I am not sure it was related to a specific fiscal year in that respect. It was related more to the specific projects and uses that money might be used for.

DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTION OF LAVI AIRCRAFT

Mr. HAMILTON. What is our position today with regard to the use of FMS financing for the purpose of the development and production of the Lavi aircraft?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Our position has been that FMS would not be used for research and development but that FMS could be used for manufacture of the engine I believe.

Mr. HAMILTON. Has there been any change in that position?

Mr. PELLETREAU. There has not been any change. This is something that is under consideration, Mr. Chairman.

R&D COSTS FOR THE LAVI PROGRAM

Mr. HAMILTON. Is it true that the R&D costs for that aircraft have doubled since the start of the program in 1979?

STATEMENT OF COL. HOMER D. MCKALIP, POLITICO-MILITARY ADVISOR, BUREAU OF NEAR EASTERN AND SOUTH ASIAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Colonel MCKALIP. That is a fair statement.

Mr. HAMILTON. Perhaps you should identify yourself for the record here.

Colonel MCKALIP. I am Colonel McKalip, formerly of Defense, now State, sir. I have switched sides.

Mr. HAMILTON. The two are not adversaries, at least I trust they are not. Well, there has been no change in our position then with regard to the Lavi fighter. Is that correct?

Mr. PELLETREAU. As a result of this latest trip, no, but we have agreed to certain licenses for certain aspects of the Lavi fighter, or lease of certain technologies.

Mr. HAMILTON. Well, why is it in our national interest to help them develop the Lavi which, as I understand it, could then become a major competitor to American aircraft on the world market?

Mr. PELLETREAU. The Israelis have assured us that they have no intention of producing the Lavi for export, no present intention.

Mr. HAMILTON. Well, I take it that matter is still under discussion and no decisions have been made.

Mr. PELLETREAU. That is correct, Mr. Chairman.

DEBT PAYMENTS OF ISRAEL AND EGYPT

Mr. HAMILTON. We have seen statistics here that suggest that, if the 1984 aid levels are straightlined, the debt payment of Israeli to the United States on the FMS program will rise to over \$2 billion by the year 1991 and Egypt's would rise to about \$1 billion.

That is \$400 million today for Egypt and about \$900 million, I think, for Israel. Are these two countries then going to need more aid simply to keep up with their debt payments in your judgment?

Mr. PELLETREAU. It is true that their debt payments are going to rise. With regard to Israel, we believe with careful management they can manage these debt payments, and it is quite customary at this time of year that we and the Israelis sit down and look at these questions in connection with our assistance to Israel. This year we intend to organize a team of economic experts within the Government, and the Israelis, we believe, will do likewise, and we will try to get a better grip on the management of this long-term problem.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Smith.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

RETURN OF THE EGYPTIAN AMBASSADOR TO ISRAEL

The issue was raised regarding the Egyptian ambassadorial problem and their reticence to recommit the Ambassador to Israel since only 8 months have passed since he was called back for consultation, and there is no embassy to speak of. You said that you were making polite overtures to the Egyptians and indicating your displeasure.

If the Reagan peace initiative is in effect still alive should they not be more than just polite overtures made to the Egyptians? That is basically a violation of the Egyptian-Israeli accord at Camp David.

The Israelis are perfectly ready, willing, and able to have their mission operating, et cetera, and the Egyptians are basically violating that accord. How would we expect the peace initiative to move forward if in fact one of the parties is already violating one of the bases of the agreements?

To follow up on Egypt, what is the State Department's concern, if any, that the Egyptians have just concluded a purchase of tanks ostensibly from Romania although Romania does not manufacture tanks? So there is apparently some connection between that sale and the Soviet Union and some other military equipment, which I do not think needs to be mentioned here. What is the State Department's concern about that?

Mr. PELLETREAU. On the first question, Mr. Smith, we have raised with the Egyptian Government the question of the return of its ambassador to Israel. The Egyptian Government has said that it intends to return its Ambassador. We hope to see that occur soon.

Mr. SMITH. Do you think the phased withdrawal will have any motivating effect on them, or was that really a ploy to bring themselves back to the center of the Arab world in any event since they were ostracized?

Mr. PELLETREAU. No. The Egyptians originally took this action when the Israeli forces went into Lebanon. I think that they probably see it, their decision, connected in some way to the continued presence of those forces in Lebanon, but now that the agreement has been reached, we think the Ambassador ought to go back and we do not like to see elements of tension between Israel and Egypt.

We would like to see relations proceeding smoothly in the manner that was envisaged under the treaty, and we will certainly work in that direction.

Mr. SMITH. Have the Israelis registered a protest or an informal kind of protest with reference to the fact that the Camp David accord is being violated by the lack of the Egyptian Ambassador in Israel, the lack of opening an Embassy in Israel, and how would you expect that to continue the forward movement of the peace process under the September 1 initiative if in fact the basic tenet of the agreement has been violated?

Mr. PELLETREAU. We want to avoid taking positions on alleged violations of the treaty by one party or another. We have not been formally called upon or asked by either side to judge whether the absence of Egypt's Ambassador from Israel constitutes a treaty violation or not.

As I said, Egypt has reaffirmed its commitment to return the Ambassador at an appropriate time. We have urged it to do so in the context of our discussions with both Egypt and Israel and that on the need for actions by each which would lead to an improvement in the atmosphere of relations.

Mr. SMITH. Well, Israel is now going to start the phased withdrawal which everybody apparently has agreed to as far as you and the administration and the Israelis and possibly Lebanon. Do you think that would be enough of a motivation to go back and ask Egypt now to come forward and to replace the Ambassador in Israel?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I think this will be a subject of continuing discussion between ourselves and the Egyptians.

EGYPTIAN TANK PURCHASE FROM ROMANIA

Mr. SMITH. Now the second part of the question was with reference to the arms purchases from Romania or tanks which Romania does not produce. What about answering that in light of the money which the subcommittee was responsible for adding to the Egyptians money over the last year in the foreign aid bill?

What consequence does the State Department see in terms of us doing this kind of thing, sending that kind of signal to Egypt that we are willing to aid them to a larger degree than previously and they turn around and buy arms from Romania which must come from the Soviet Union?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I am not totally current on the question of Romanian tanks to Egypt, and I think I ought to provide a statement on that for you. But I would like to say that Egypt has never considered the United States its exclusive source of arms, and it has always maintained its freedom to go elsewhere.

We are the primary source of supply now for the Egyptian Army, and we think that we will continue to be. But this does not mean that Egypt will not look elsewhere first of all to maintain some of the equipment that it has from other sources or possibly to acquire some equipment from other sources if the costs in other terms are right.

Egypt has a large standing army with a lot of obsolete equipment. It feels that it faces certain threats that it needs to be prepared to defend against, and I am not sure that this question, standing alone, as long as it is not representative of a broader pattern of Egyptian procurement, is a matter of major concern.

RENEWED SOVIET-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS

Mr. SMITH. Let me go back to Mr. Lantos' line of questioning. Does it strike you as a possibility that the Soviet Union, giving the answer that you gave in theory that they are not at this point too much in control of what Syria does has now plans to jump over Syria and over Israel and go back to try and mend its fences with Egypt to now sort of position themselves on both sides of Israel? Is that a possibility?

Why would they be selling tanks to Egypt? Basically Egypt threw out the Soviet Union a number of years ago and has not par-

ticularly up until this point made any overtures for any great return of the old relationship.

Mr. PELLETREAU. There have been some indications that Egypt and the Soviet Union might seek to improve their relationship somewhat. I do not think that should be a matter of major concern to us unless it leads to a complete pattern of activity.

Mr. SMITH. You do not find yet any pattern in the thought that they are publicly going to try to mend some fences and the fact that the Egyptians will buy tanks from Romania which basically, is my understanding, does not produce tanks?

Mr. PELLETREAU. That standing alone I would not find a significant change in Egyptian policy.

INCREASE IN ESF AND FMS FOR EGYPT

Mr. SMITH. Should we be adding money to the Egyptian FMS or ESF if in fact they are going to turn around and buy weapons from the Soviet Union, given the delicate balance in the Middle East at this moment?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I think we need to look at what Egypt's requirements are, and they are very large, and what they use our funds for and what they intend to use our funds for and whether those funds are being used for the purposes that they are intended for. There is no question that we continue to feel that support of Egypt is enormously important to our Middle East relationship and, specifically support to the Egyptian Armed Forces. It is a major element of our total policy.

Mr. SMITH. President Mubarak, I believe, will be here in September from what I understand. Will the State Department be raising the issue at that time, or would you consider discussing it with Mr. Shultz and the others so that that issue may be raised when President Mubarak comes here? I think it is an important issue.

Mr. PELLETREAU. As I understand it, President Mubarak will be coming to the United Nations, and I am sure we will work out some way to have some discussions, and this question will certainly be considered.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. HAMILTON. Mr. Levine.

MAINTAINING THE PEACE PROCESS BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL

Mr. LEVINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to follow up Mr. Smith's questions in this area as well with Mr. Pelletreau.

It seems that the reluctance or refusal of Egypt to return her Ambassador to Israel is perhaps only the most evident example of a clear cooling of relations if not between Egypt and Israel at least from Egypt to Israel, and in light of the support that this Congress has shown for Egypt in a whole variety of directions which I believe has been appropriate and has been predicated upon Egypt's constructive role in the peace process, I would ask you to speculate as to the continued appropriateness of that unless we do see a continued pattern of or a return to the past pattern of trying to work closely to maintain the peace process between Egypt and Israel.

I am deeply troubled as I am sure you gathered by my first series of questions just about the Ambassador about this whole cooling of

relations because if I were an Israeli asking myself whether or not I would like to risk whatever it is that would be at risk and obviously some significant security questions would be at risk in making peace or agreements with other Arab nations, I would be asking myself how long-term these agreements are likely to be if almost immediately after the return of the Sinai and the oilfields and the other very significant concessions the Israelis made, the Egyptians, the only Arab State with whom Israel has signed a peace treaty, appear to be just backtracking to such a significant extent.

To what extent are these relevant concerns and to what extent are these issues which have been the subject of discussion between our State Department and other parties in the Middle East particularly Egypt?

Mr. PELLETREAU. The key point to focus on is the Egyptian-Israeli treaty itself. Egypt has maintained its commitment to that treaty.

Mr. LEVINE. Well, one of those commitments, and again I do not want to go get into a long thing, about this, but one of the commitments was ambassadorial relationships, perhaps the most significant symbol of the treaty. So to say that Egypt had maintained its commitment under the treaty is certainly a suspect conclusion to reach in light of its refusal to return its Ambassador.

Mr. PELLETREAU. As I just said, we do not want to prejudge the question of whether withdrawing its Ambassador and not sending its ambassador back is a violation of the treaty. Neither party has asked us to make a judgment on that question.

I think if you look at the language of the treaty you can see that it is open to a pretty broad interpretation on that. We do want the Ambassador to go back.

When the Ambassador was called back to Egypt, considering the full range of possible actions that Egypt might have taken at the time, given the fact that Israel was taking military action against another Arab country, this was not a major action, and the Egyptian commitment to the treaty itself, we believe, remains strong.

There are a number of what I would call pesky issues that are pending between the two countries that we would like to see resolved. They include some questions over exactly where the line should go and where forces should be.

They include a question at Taba. They include a question of import licenses and some other things. We would like to see the situation develop where the two countries would seriously work to resolve these outstanding differences, and that includes the ambassadorial question as well.

Mr. LEVINE. Well, again because there are such severe time constraints in this process and it is hard to get into these questions in adequate depth in this type of a forum, I am very pleased to hear you conclude the Egyptian commitment is a process and the treaty remains strong. I believe that is essential, but I must at least raise for the record some questions with regard to the factual assertions that you make that the specific action of removing the Ambassador was not a strong action.

I mean, it was as you say there is room for disagreement within the context of the treaty in the same way as you do not want to

prejudge whether the treaty has been violated in a certain respect. I suspect that a case could be made that it is rather hasty to conclude that the treaty is also being lived up to 100 percent.

It is in this gray area. I hope that this will be an area that you will be emphasizing on a strong and as long as necessary repeated basis.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE UNITED STATES EMBASSY BOMBING IN BEIRUT

Let me move briefly to a series of other areas that should only take a moment or two each. Do we know at this point who was responsible for the bombing of our Embassy in Beirut?

Mr. PELLETREAU. No, we do not. We have not reached any definite conclusions. The Lebanese have an ongoing negotiation on that investigation in that regard.

Mr. LEVINE. If this were an executive session would your answer be the same?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Yes, it would.

Mr. LEVINE. When we were at breakfast with some Israeli officials recently certain high-ranking members of the Israeli Government were willing to say to a number of us that they felt fairly confident that they knew who had bombed our Embassy. Have we had any consultations with the Israelis in terms of trying to get to the bottom of this?

Mr. PELLETREAU. We have discussed it, and with the Lebanese as well. We are very anxious to get to the bottom of it. We would like to.

Mr. LEVINE. Are you familiar with who the Israelis believe were responsible for the bombing of the Embassy? Do you know what their conclusions are?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Not in full detail.

Mr. LEVINE. I simply suggest that if they believe they know and we do not believe we know that it would probably be worth knowing in full detail who they think did it so that we could either accept or reject their theory.

Mr. PELLETREAU. I think the right people in our Government do, sir.

SYRIAN SHELLING OF LEBANESE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

Mr. LEVINE. Are you familiar with any reports of Syrian shelling of Lebanese Christian communities?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I am familiar with some charges in that respect.

Mr. LEVINE. Do you believe there is any substance to those charges?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I do not think we have reached any clear conclusion on just who was immediately responsible for which types of shelling. This is some shelling that took place during the last couple of days of President Gemayel's visit.

I think that is what you are referring to, and there was quite a broad span of shelling on one of those days. Most of it came out of the Druze area. There was some from the upper Druze area that could have come from areas where Syrian forces were, but we have not really spotted that.

Mr. LEVINE. I have heard repeated reports of Syrian shelling of Christian villages in Lebanon, and in fact I asked Mr. Eagleburger this question when he testified before us some number of weeks ago. He indicated he would submit an answer for the record.

I have not yet seen that answer. Perhaps it has been submitted. I would appreciate it if you could expeditiously obtain an answer for the record in terms of whether or not we are aware of Syrian shelling of Christian villages in any time in the past 6 weeks in Lebanon and the nature and extent of such shelling if some exists.

Mr. PELLETREAU. Fine. I would be happy to do so.¹

ROLE AND MISSION OF AMBASSADOR M'FARLANE

Mr. LEVINE. Thank you.

I am not sure that I understood an answer that you provided accurately earlier. Let me just ask about it to make sure that I did.

One of the members asked you, I think it was Mr. Zschau, some questions with regard to the nature of Mr. McFarlane's mission, and your response was I cannot really get into Bud McFarlane's mission at this point. Was that because you did not know what it was, or was that because you were not at liberty to divulge that to us?

Mr. PELLETREAU. It is largely the latter—that he has a good deal of leeway out there, and I think it would not serve a useful purpose to discuss the mission that he is currently engaged in and the diplomatic discussions and contacts that he is currently having.

Mr. LANTOS. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. LEVINE. Let me followup for a moment and then I would be delighted to. Would you be at liberty to discuss that in executive session?

Mr. PELLETREAU. No, I do not believe I would be able to add very much at this time.

Mr. LEVINE. Would anyone in your department discuss that in executive session?

Mr. PELLETREAU. It is possible. I would have to inquire.

Mr. LEVINE. I would appreciate that, and I will be happy to yield to my colleague from California.

ADMINISTRATION DECISION TO REPLACE AMBASSADOR HABIB

Mr. LANTOS. I just want to followup. These hearings usually do not deal with constituent matters, but Philip Habib is a constituent of mine. I would like to raise some both specific and generic questions.

It is my reading that Ambassador Habib conducted himself through all these negotiations in an exemplary fashion carrying out the policies of our Government. Do you agree with that?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I agree with it totally, sir.

Mr. LANTOS. In view of that, what is your view of our having relieved him of his responsibility because of Syrian pressure. Whatever other explanations have been given relating to his fatigue and health and desire to return to life, it is obvious to everybody that it was Mr. Assad who no longer considered him persona grata. There-

¹ The information was provided on a classified basis and is retained in subcommittee files.

fore, we pulled him off the job, sent in the Secretary in the first instance to try to recapture whatever momentum there might have been. Now we are doing the same with Mr. McFarlane.

Is it our policy to give other governments a veto power over our representatives in negotiations such as the one Mr. Habib was conducting?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I must say I do not agree fully with your characterization of the reasons behind the change. Phil Habib went through 2 arduous years in the Middle East with lots of exhausting nights and lost sleep.

Mr. LANTOS. I agree with that.

Mr. PELLETREAU. And accomplished a distinguished record with some very distinguished accomplishments.

Mr. LANTOS. I agree with that, too.

Mr. PELLETREAU. I think that he agreed fully with the actions that were taken. He will continue to be available to this administration and this government to consult on the issues, and I do not think that there is any personal slur against him in any way because of the new appointment.

Mr. LANTOS. Well, not on our part, certainly not on our part. The question I raised does not relate to any blemish on his performance.

It relates to our Government's decision to pull him off this job because of Syrian pressure. Are you suggesting that was not the case?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I am saying that Syrian pressure is not what led us to do that. It could have been one element that was taken into consideration.

We certainly are not giving any other governments a veto power, as you said, over how we conduct our diplomacy. We want to conduct our diplomacy in this difficult issue in the most effective possible way we can, and we think we are going about it that way.

Mr. LANTOS. I want to thank my colleague for yielding.

UNITED STATES INVOLVEMENT IN LIBYA-CHAD CONFLICT

Mr. LEVINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I only have two additional questions, and that will conclude my long windedness this afternoon.

I did not hear, Mr. Pelletreau, your full response, and I believe it was Mr. Lantos who was asking you about some aspects of the Libya-Chad involvement and specifically I am interested in knowing whether there is any contemplation of U.S. military involvement in these activities under any foreseeable set of circumstances?

Mr. PELLETREAU. My answer to Mr. Lantos was one that had to preserve an element of openness to how we respond to actions that have not yet been taken and that may be taken in the future. I think we have to do that.

Mr. LEVINE. Let me ask you this. Has there been any discussion thus far in the deliberation that you are familiar with of contemplated military involvement by our country?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I am not aware of any, although I think there is some relationship to the current position of the *Eisenhower* and its task force in the Mediterranean in international waters.

Mr. LEVINE. It seems like you are leaving a door very wide open intentionally, if I am reading you correctly. Would you care to respond to that?

Mr. PELLETREAU. No further comments.

Mr. LEVINE. My final question is somewhere between a comment and a question. It may end up as a question, but there is a comment attached to it.

I have watched with great admiration the activities of Secretary Shultz in the region and particularly his activities in obtaining the agreement between Israel and Lebanon and in fact have made a number of public statements both on and off the floor in support of his work. Again for the record I would commend his work and his success.

Mr. LANTOS. Also a constituent of mine, I might add.

Mr. SMITH. But do they contribute to your campaign?

CONTINUING UNITED STATES EFFORTS FOR SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL

Mr. LEVINE. One of the aspects of that agreement that seems to me to be especially noteworthy is I think a clarification of an ambiguity that existed before in terms of both Israel's very clear desire to leave Lebanon and very clear renunciation of any territorial ambitions in that area on the one hand and Syria's unwillingness to do so on the other hand. What I guess concerns me subsequently to that activity and that increasing clarification, which I think a number of us and a number of people in the administration suspected for some time but certainly was underscored is a blurring of that perception, a backing off, if you will, of such a constant wish that Syria will respond in a way that we would like. Perhaps we bend over backwards to cast Syria in a more optimistic and positive light than actions dictate.

I guess my concern is that we at least maintain the clarity of perspective that developed immediately upon the signing of this agreement and that this administration not revert back to some of the misperceptions that the chairman, I think, appropriately noted during his first round of questions to you. That is I guess as much a statement as a question, but if you have any response to that, I would welcome it.

Mr. PELLETREAU. I do not think there is any backsliding on our part in that perception. The fact that we have not yet found the right combination with Syria does not mean we should not keep trying, and we will keep trying and will portray the situation with Syria in a way that allows us to keep trying.

But there is no question in our minds that Israel does want to withdraw from Lebanon and has entered an agreement under which it would carry out such a withdrawal. We would like to see Syria negotiate with Lebanon the terms of its withdrawal.

Mr. LEVINE. Thank you.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Solarz.

REQUEST FROM THE LEBANESE FOR SYRIAN WITHDRAWAL

Mr. SOLARZ. Thank you very much.

Why has the Lebanese Government not formally asked the Syrians to leave?

Mr. PELLETREAU. This did come up a little earlier. There is no question. Everybody knows the Lebanese Government wants the Syrians to leave.

This came up at the Arab League last fall at an Arab summit, and the Arab summit passed a resolution calling on—

Mr. SOLARZ. I am familiar with all of that, but without in any way casting doubt on the desire and the determination of the Lebanese Government to secure the withdrawal of all foreign forces, why have they not made this formal request?

Mr. PELLETREAU. As they have explained it to us, they feel that baldly tabling the demand would be forcing a confrontation, and they feel that the way is still open to working the negotiation. This is an understandable way of proceeding.

This is their—

Mr. SOLARZ. Do we share that?

Mr. PELLETREAU. At this point we understand it.

ARAB LEAGUE SUPPORT FOR WITHDRAWAL

Mr. SOLARZ. Why have they not asked for a meeting of the Arab League in which they could secure Arab approval for their desire to have all foreign forces withdraw in a more specific sense than the Arab League voted along those lines the last time? In other words, in light of the agreement between Israel and Lebanon, why have they not attempted to secure from the Arab League an expression of support for their efforts to get foreign forces out, which would presumably be helpful to them.

Mr. PELLETREAU. Yes. President Gemayel has spoken out in favor of such Arab League consideration, but it happens very often in such Arab League deliberations. There is a good deal of negotiation that goes on before you actually get to the convocation of a meeting. Certainly the Lebanese are very active in the Arab world in presenting their case.

Mr. SOLARZ. It is not clear to me. Are the Lebanese trying to get such a meeting convened in any active sense?

Mr. PELLETREAU. It is not at the top of the way they are proceeding, but it remains an option.

Mr. SOLARZ. That suggests to me that the reason they have not pressed for such a meeting is that they believe that if such a meeting were held at the present time a resolution reaffirming the call for the withdrawal of all foreign forces would not pass.

Mr. PELLETREAU. Not necessarily. The Arab world generally prefers to react to problems and try to settle problems in ways that do not reveal the differences between countries and that do not reveal deep divisions, and I think that that is the way that they would prefer to have it rather than going to the Arab League as though to a trial where divisions would be very open and separate. I think that is the way many Arab governments would react to the whole question.

Mr. SOLARZ. Is any thought being given by the Lebanese Government to going to the United Nations to seek a resolution of the General Assembly supporting their desire to get foreign forces off their territory?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Well, we already have resolutions in that regard that call for the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Lebanon. I think going back to the United Nations is an option that they would have, again maybe not the top one.

FMS CREDITS FOR R&D

Mr. SOLARZ. Are there any precedents for the use of our FMS credits for R&D in the past?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I am not aware of a specific precedent on R&D.

Mr. SOLARZ. I believe it was used by Israel in the past perhaps for the Merkava.

Mr. PELLETREAU. In the Merkava it was used for the offshore procurement. Whether it was used for R&D, too, I am not positive.

Colonel McKALIP. It was used in the Merkava and also, I believe, there was a project having to do with some fuel tanks for the F-16 aircraft.

Mr. PELLETREAU. F-15's.

Mr. SOLARZ. Now, I gather——

Colonel McKALIP. These were exceptions to policy, but there have been those.

Mr. SOLARZ. Why were those exceptions made?

Colonel McKALIP. I do not know.

Mr. SOLARZ. I gather there is nothing in law which prohibits the use of FMS funds for R&D?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I do not believe there is anything in the law.

Colonel McKALIP. Specifically, you are correct.

Mr. SOLARZ. Have you given any thought to permitting the use of FMS funds for R&D, to the extent that the R&D is being used for purposes that are consistent with American interests and objectives, in other words, to develop capacities which are potentially utilizable by our own Armed Forces as distinguished from R&D in general which might duplicate work we have already done?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Yes. These questions are under active consideration, yes.

Mr. SOLARZ. It is true, is it not, that if we provided FMS credits for R&D that we would retain the right to deny permission to whatever country would use those credits for R&D for them to export the item that they produced with the help of those R&D funds. Specifically in the case of the Lavi, even if we provided FMS credits for R&D to help develop a plane some people fear would be competitive with American-produced aircraft, to the extent it was competitive we could presumably say to the country that produced it that it cannot export it to countries that might otherwise want to purchase American aircraft. Is that correct?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I believe that is correct.

Colonel McKALIP. That is correct. The normal third country transfer restrictions would apply to the transfer of technology as well as goods.

ISRAELI POSITION ON WITHDRAWAL FROM LEBANON

Mr. SOLARZ. I gather that Israel's position with respect to withdrawal of its forces from Lebanon is that it is prepared to withdraw

its forces in the context of the agreement if and when Syria is prepared to withdraw its forces.

Mr. PELLETREAU. That is correct. That is Israel's position.

Mr. SOLARZ. Do we support that position?

Mr. PELLETREAU. We have acknowledged that position.

Mr. SOLARZ. Well, I was under the impression that we had given some communication to Israel in which we assured them that we would not press them to leave Lebanon in the absence of a comparable withdrawal by Syrian forces. Is that not the case?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I cannot comment specifically on that.

Mr. SOLARZ. Well, are we in favor of Israel's withdrawing without an agreement on the part of Syria's withdrawal?

Mr. PELLETREAU. We would like to see the Israeli's withdraw in implementation of the agreement.

Mr. SOLARZ. Even without a Syrian withdrawal?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Our policy is to try to get all the foreign forces out of Lebanon.

Mr. SOLARZ. If Israel would withdraw without a Syrian withdrawal as part of the arrangement what incentive would the Syrians have to withdraw, particularly if it was in the context of an agreement which the Syrians have categorically condemned and whose mere existence they now sight as a justification for their indefinite presence in Lebanon.

Let the record note that the witness raised his eyebrows and smiled, for whatever significance that would have.

Mr. PELLETREAU. There is a question of how much incentive that really provides to Syria. People debate this question.

PURPOSE OF U.S. CONTINGENT OF MNF

Mr. SOLARZ. I wanted your judgment on it. I know it is debated. That is why I asked. Could you briefly describe the purpose of the U.S. troops in the multinational force? What political purpose are they supposed to serve?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Yes. U.S. troops in the multinational force provide a supporting presence to the Lebanese Government and the Lebanese Army as that Government seeks to exert its authority in Lebanon. In a diverse confessional atmosphere, the presence of international forces, there is a confidence-building measure both to the Lebanese Army itself and to the Lebanese populus at large. We think they serve a very useful purpose.

Mr. SOLARZ. And if at some point it became clear that the foreign forces were not going to withdraw from Lebanon in spite of our best efforts, would that purpose still make sense?

Mr. PELLETREAU. As long as our forces were helping the Lebanese Army and the Lebanese Government in asserting its authority over parts of its national territory, we would want to keep open that possibility. It has done that over the part of the Lebanese territory that is currently under Lebanese control.

Soon there is going to be an opportunity for the Lebanese Government to extend that control. There may be other opportunities.

UNITED STATES TANK SALE TO SAUDI ARABIA

Mr. SOLARZ. One final question, Mr. Chairman. I gather we are planning to sell 100 tanks to Saudi Arabia. You have or will be sending up a notification to that effect.

Could you let us know precisely what we are planning to sell them, the extent to which this contains particularly sophisticated equipment such as night sighting devices and whether this sale is being provided to some extent as a reward for the Saudis for their effective help in enabling us to persuade the Syrians to get out of Lebanon?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Diehl, do you have the details on that?

Colonel McKALIP. I can make a few comments, yes. These 100 tanks, which we are proposing to sell to Saudi Arabia, is in continuation of a modernization program of their armed forces that they embarked on some time ago. Specifically, two brigades which are now considered motorized brigades are being mechanized. That includes the addition of tank battalions.

These tanks will be used to equip those tank battalions. The tanks themselves are the M-60A3 model which do have the tank thermo sights, the passive night devices which you mentioned and the other normal—

Mr. SOLARZ. Do we think they pose any threat to Israel?

Colonel McKALIP. I do not believe they pose a threat to Israel.

SAUDI DEPLOYMENT OF TANKS

Mr. SOLARZ. Where will they be deployed?

Colonel McKALIP. At the present time we anticipate that one battalion will be in the north of the country.

Mr. SOLARZ. One?

Colonel McKALIP. And one will be in the south at Khamis Muhayt. This is based on the fact that that is the present location of these two existing brigades that are to be mechanized.

NUMBER OF TANKS DEPLOYED AT TABUK

Mr. SOLARZ. Well, how many tanks are being deployed at Tabuk?

Colonel McKALIP. Again, that would be approximately one-half of them.

Mr. SOLARZ. That is 50. How long would it take the tanks to reach Israel from Tabuk?

Colonel McKALIP. I hate to say this, sir, because I am a tanker, but going cross country I am not sure they would make it. That is pretty rough terrain.

Mr. SOLARZ. Do they have tank transporters?

Colonel McKALIP. They do not have extensive capability at the present time.

Mr. SOLARZ. But if they got them would they then be able to take the tanks into Israeli territory?

Colonel McKALIP. Of course, it is possible.

Mr. SOLARZ. I am not that familiar with the precise terrain, but given the nature of the terrain, it is possible?

Colonel McKALIP. Yes, they would be road bound. I think this is a very remote concern.

Mr. SOLARZ. Have they had tanks at Tabuk in the past? Colonel McKALIP. They have tanks in Tabuk now.

Mr. SOLARZ. What kind?

Colonel McKALIP: At the present time they have M-60A1's the earlier model of the M-60, and they have some tanks of French origin. I believe they are AMX-30's. They have had them there for some time. In fact, Tabuk is also the home of their armor school, I believe.

SAUDI SUPPORT FOR A RESOLUTION OF THE LEBANON CONFLICT

Mr. SOLARZ. Last in this regard, Mr. Pelletreau, could you characterize for us the degree to which the Saudis have been helping us in our diplomatic efforts to secure a resolution of the Lebanese problem? I know they support the effort to get all foreign forces out, but have they been as effective as we hoped they would be? Have they utilized the full panoply of resources at their command in an effort to support our own diplomatic efforts, or have they more or less paid lip-service to what we are trying to do without making much of an energetic effort on its behalf?

Mr. PELLETREAU. They have remained engaged, and we think effectively engaged, in two different aspects of this problem. The first is the support for the Lebanese Government, as such, and the second is specific support for urging Lebanese-Syrian negotiations for the withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon.

They have been engaged in this quest with us. We think it is important that they keep engaged.

Mr. SOLARZ. Have they either offered the Syrians additional financial aid as inducement to get them to withdraw or indicated an intention to reduce the level of their subsidies if they do not withdraw?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I am not aware of their discussions with the Syrians in that detail.

Mr. SOLARZ. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

U.S. POLICY TOWARD THE PERSIAN GULF

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Pelletreau, the French are training Iraqi pilots on the super-Entenard aircraft and the Exocet missiles. A Pentagon spokesman recently said that it may be only a matter of weeks before the Iraqis finish their training and they may strike at the Iranian oil facilities.

The Iranians have said that if this should happen they will close the gulf. I understand we said if that happens we will use military means to keep the gulf open. Is that the policy of our Government now?

Mr. PELLETREAU. We have repeated our earlier policy that we would act to maintain freedom of navigation through the Strait of Hormuz, which is an international waterway and through which oil supplies that are vital to many of our friends, and very important to ourselves, pass.

Mr. LANTOS. Given the wholly irrational character of the Iran-Iraq war, how farfetched is the scenario I have just suggested?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I think it is unlikely because I think that even if the Iraqis did succeed in hitting a tanker or two or even an Iran-

ian loading facility, the Iranians would see it in their interest to get those facilities repaired just as quickly as they could and to resume their own exports of oil which, after all, are financing their whole military effort. Now if they let loose a whole bunch of mines in the Strait of Hormuz this would be a self-mutilating gesture. It is not impossible. It is not unknown in that part of the world, but I think it is unlikely that this would really occur.

FRENCH SUPPLY OF EXOCET MISSILES TO IRAQ

Mr. LANTOS. What is our view toward the French equipping the Iraqis with the Exocet missiles?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Well, our own position, as you know, is the position of absolute neutrality between the two countries. I am not sure that we have taken a position on the French equipment. I think that is a question primarily between the French and Iraqi Governments.

No U.S. equipment is involved. We have, as a general policy since the outbreak of the war, tried to keep the war from spreading and as a general policy discourage the provision of armaments to either side, but with regard to this specific instance I would have to take the question as to whether we have actually discussed this with the French.

OIL SPILL IN THE GULF

Mr. LANTOS. Have we taken any steps to suggest ways of dealing with the environmental disaster which is unfolding in the gulf?

Mr. PELLETREAU. Yes, we have.

Mr. LANTOS. What specifically?

Mr. PELLETREAU. First of all, you know a team from the U.S. private sector was out there, and I think is still out there ready to act as soon as it can. We have had people from our Environmental Protection Agency and the Coast Guard who have been out there helping measure the extent of the damage.

We have frankly called on all parties, even if they could not agree to a broader cease-fire to consider agreeing to this more limited cease-fire for the purpose of protecting the environment and bring to an end this gulf spill which is proving a tragedy and very detrimental to the marine life of the whole area. There have been efforts not only by the states in the area but by the regional organization in the area to try to bring about those conditions, and we have supported those, too.

PERSECUTION OF THE BAHAI'S IN IRAN

Mr. LANTOS. What is the latest information that the Department has on the large-scale execution of members of the Bahai faith in Iran?

Mr. PELLETREAU. I will have to take that question, sir. I do not have a personal knowledge of what our latest information is.

[The information follows:]

While we have little or no direct information from Iran on the plight of the Bahai community in Iran, the Bahai community in the United States estimates that about 159 Bahais have been executed in Iran since the revolution of February, 1979. We

have no reason to doubt those figures. The total number of Bahais in Iran is estimated to be about 300,000 out of a total Iranian population of about 40 million.

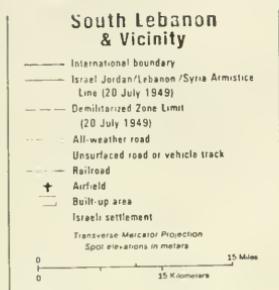
Mr. LANTOS. I want to thank you, Mr. Secretary, and your associates for participating in this hearing before us.

Mr. PELLETREAU. It was my pleasure.

[Whereupon, at 4 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX 1

MAP OF LEBANON





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APPENDIX 2

BIOGRAPHIES OF WITNESSES

ROBERT H. PELLETREAU, JR., DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR NEAR EASTERN AND SOUTH ASIAN AFFAIRS

Robert H. Pelletreau, Jr., was born in Patchogue, New York, in 1935. He attended Yale University (B.A. '57), Harvard Law School (LL.B '61), and is a member of the New York Bar Association. Since joining the U.S. Foreign Service in 1962, his diplomatic career has included service in Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, U.S. Ambassador to Bahrain, Director for Arabian Peninsula Affairs in the U.S. Department of State 1981-83. He served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for the Middle East, South Asia and Africa during 1980-81 and was awarded the Department of Defense Distinguished Civilian Service Medal in January 1981. Ambassador Pelletreau was appointed to his present position in March, 1983.

Ambassador Pelletreau speaks Arabic and French.

Ambassador Pelletreau is married and has three children.

COLONEL HOMER D. MCKALIP, U.S. ARMY, POLITICO-MILITARY ADVISER, BUREAU OF NEAR EASTERN AND SOUTH ASIAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Colonel Homer D. McKalip has served as the Politico-Military Adviser in the Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs in the Department of State since July 1983. For the three years immediately preceding this assignment, he served in the Office of the Secretary of Defense where he directed all American security assistance programs in the Near East and South Asia region.

Colonel McKalip received a Bachelor of Arts degree from the Pennsylvania State University and Master of International Affairs degree from the George Washington University. He is a graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the National War College.

An armor officer, Colonel McKalip has commanded tank and reconnaissance units in the United States and Europe. In addition to his assignment in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, he has had previous security assistance assignments in Vietnam, in Iran, and on the staff of the U.S. Army Chief of Staff.

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